

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

ORDER NO. 91-153

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

AMENDING ORDER NO. 88-105, REQUIRING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO TO CEASE AND DESIST DISCHARGING WASTE FROM ITS SOUTHEAST WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLANT AND FROM ITS SOUTHEAST AND RICHMOND-SUNSET WET WEATHER DIVERSION STRUCTURES CONTRARY TO DISCHARGE PROHIBITIONS IN ORDER NOS. 84-27, 84-28, AND 87-120 (NPDES PERMITS)

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region (hereinafter the Board) finds that:

1. The City and County of San Francisco (hereinafter the City) owns and operates the Southeast Water Pollution Control Plant. The plant treats sewage from the eastern two-thirds of the city, discharging it to San Francisco Bay via a deep water outfall at Pier 80 (Army Street terminal). During wet weather periods, effluent flows in excess of 110 mgd are discharged to Islais Creek via a near shore outfall at Quint Street. During an average rainfall year, such discharges occur 47 times for 600 hours/year and total 1,700 million gallons/year.
2. On June 20, 1984, the Board issued waste discharger requirements for the Southeast plant in Order No. 84-027 (NPDES permit CA0037664). On the same date, the Board adopted Order No. 84-029, requiring the City to cease and desist from discharging waste contrary to the requirements in Order No. 84-027. Specifically, the City was violating the prohibition against discharge of waste with less than 10:1 initial dilution. On June 21, 1989, the Board reissued the Southeast plant's NPDES permit in Order No. 89-101.
3. On June 15, 1988, the Board adopted Order No. 88-105, revising certain compliance dates set forth in the earlier cease and desist order (Order No. 84-029). With respect to the initial dilution violations, Order No. 88-105 set the following schedule:
 - a. Expand effluent pump station (95% compliance during dry weather) by January 1, 1989.
 - b. Install third pump at effluent pump station (full compliance during dry weather) by March 1, 1989.

- c. Select alternative to address prohibition during wet weather (i.e. new Bay outfall, cross-town facility, or exception request) by May 1, 1990.
 - d. Submit schedule for design and construction of preferred alternative by May 1, 1990.
4. The City has complied with items a. and b. in the above schedule. In a February 8, 1990, letter, the City requested an extension in the compliance dates for items c. and d. In a May 4, 1990, letter, the Board's Executive Officer indicated that this request would be considered by the Board as soon as practicable.
5. The City is requesting an extension for two reasons. First, the City anticipates changes in objectives and effluent limits for toxic pollutants following approval of the Enclosed Bays and Estuaries plan. These changes may affect the feasibility of a new Bay outfall. A wasteload allocation for toxic pollutants in Lower San Francisco Bay by the Board could also affect the City's decision.

Second, the City will be making significant capital improvements for other wastewater projects through 1996, in order to comply with Order No. 88-105. City staff expect to spend a total of \$620 million on projects that will be completed during the period 1991 through 1996 (1990 dollars). The least costly option for year-round compliance with 10:1 initial dilution, a new Bay outfall, will cost about \$45 million. Another option, the cross-town transport will cost about \$145 million. The City is concerned about its ability to finance this additional project at the same time as the other required projects.

6. The City has made good progress in completing wastewater projects necessary to comply with Order No. 88-105. Wet-weather facilities were completed at Yosemite-Fitch in mid-1989 and will be completed at Sunnydale by November 1991. All other projects should be completed by their final compliance dates, with the possible exception of the Islais Creek wet-weather project. For this project, planning and design has been delayed by unanticipated site conditions and uncertainty over Caltrans' plans for earthquake-damaged Interstate 280 near Islais Creek.
7. Effluent discharges from the Southeast plant to Islais Creek have caused short-term water quality impacts. Creek monitoring has detected occasional exceedances of water quality objectives for dissolved oxygen, pH, and un-ionized ammonia during discharge periods. The effluent is a mix of primary-treated and secondary-treated waste, and some effluent solids undoubtedly settle onto the creek bottom.

Any delay in compliance with the 10:1 initial dilution requirement should be accompanied by interim measures to reduce the water quality impacts of the Quint Street discharge.

8. Bottom sediments at Islais Creek are already impacted by combined sewer overflows and past discharges. Prior to 1967, the Southeast plant provided only primary treatment and discharged all of its effluent to Islais Creek. Between 1982 and 1989, a significant fraction of the expanded plant's effluent discharged here. Rain-diluted sewage still discharges to Islais Creek about 50 times per winter from seven overflow points. These overflows will continue until 1996, when the Islais Creek wet-weather project is completed, reducing overflow frequency to an average of ten per year. Extending the deadline for the Southeast plant to comply with 10:1 initial dilution, coupled with interim measures to improve discharge quality, will not significantly affect Islais Creek water quality.
9. On October 16, 1991, the Board adopted Order No. 91-154 amending the Southeast plant's NPDES permit. The permit amendment applied a shallow-water effluent limit for acute toxicity to the Islais Creek discharge, consistent with the Basin Plan. The City is currently unable to consistently meet the shallow-water effluent limit for pH, and should be subject to a performance-based effluent limit for this pollutant pending full compliance.
10. This action to amend an order enforcing waste discharge requirements adopted by the Board is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15121 of the Resources Agency CEQA Guidelines.
11. The discharger and interested persons have been notified of the Board's intent to amend the enforcement order, and have been provided with the opportunity for a public hearing and the opportunity to submit their written views and recommendations.
12. The Board, in a public meeting, heard and considered all comments pertaining to the discharge.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:


- A. Order No. 88-105, a Cease and Desist Order, issued to the City and County of San Francisco, shall be amended as shown below.
- B. Provision B (Southeast WPCP) shall be revised to read:

The City shall achieve compliance with the discharge prohibitions of Order 84-027 (Southeast WPCP) with respect to the prohibition of discharges with less than 10:1 initial dilution (A.3) according to the following time schedule:

<u>Task</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
1. Expand effluent pump station (95% compliance during dry weather)	January 1, 1989
2. Install third pump at effluent pump station full compliance during dry weather)	March 1, 1989
3. Select alternative to address prohibition during wet weather (e.g. cross town facility, new bay outfall, or exception request), including completion of facility planning and CEQA compliance	November 1, 1994
4. Implement interim measures listed in Attachment 1 to offset water quality impacts of continued near-shore discharge	

Pending full compliance with the prohibition, the following interim effluent limit shall apply to the discharge of Southeast plant effluent to Islais Creek: the pH shall not exceed 9.0 nor be less than 6.0. The City shall comply with all other requirements of its NPDES permit.

I, Steven R. Ritchie, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, on October 16, 1991.



STEVEN R. RITCHIE
Executive Officer

Attachment

Attachment 1 - Interim Measures

The following measures are intended to offset water quality impacts of continued near-shore discharge at Islais Creek during wet weather. All measures are required until the Southeast plant fully complies with the prohibition against discharges with less than 10:1 initial dilution (or obtains an exception to the prohibition). The Board will decide which measures should be continued beyond that date.

1. Effluent repiping

By January 1, 1994, the City shall modify the Southeast plant and related facilities to assure that only secondary effluent can discharge to Islais Creek during wet weather periods. (Normally, during peak wet weather periods, plant effluent is a blend of primary-treated and secondary-treated waste.)

2. Expanded source control

By January 1, 1992, the City shall submit an implementation program for additional source control, including pre-treatment program additions, in the Southeast drainage. The program will seek to further reduce the loading of toxic pollutants from indoor drains. The program should target specific pollutants, based on their potential for exceeding Basin Plan objectives for receiving waters. The program should identify specific actions to be taken, by whom, and by what date. The program shall include monitoring to determine the effectiveness of additional source control in the Southeast drainage.

3. Stormwater BMPs

Upon Board approval of the Cease and Desist Order amendment, the City shall extend its program of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) to cover the entire City. (The current stormwater BMP program is linked to the City's Oceanside plant and applies only to that portion of the city which drains to the ocean.) Specifically, provision E.8 of Order No. 90-093 (waste discharge requirements for Oceanside plant) shall apply city-wide.